

Appln No. 09/997,264

Amdt date February 18, 2005

Reply to Office action of November 18, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-10 and 13-16 are pending in this application, of which claim 1 is independent. Claim 2 has been amended. The amendments add no new matter and find full support in the application as originally filed. In view of the above amendments and following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and a timely indication of allowance.

Request for Acknowledgment of Receipt of Priority Documents

On April 22, 2002, Applicant submitted a certified copy of a priority document (French Patent Application No. 0015516, which was filed on November 30, 2000) to the U.S. Patent Office. Applicant requests that the Examiner acknowledge that the Office has received this priority document (e.g., on FORM PTO-326) or notify Applicant that the Office has not received this document. Applicant has previously requested acknowledgement of this document and the Examiner has not done so. As such, Applicant requests a telephone conference with the Examiner to discuss why the priority document is not being acknowledged.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 3-10 and 13-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over GB 1593738 (GB '738) in view of Delannoy (U.S. Patent No. 4,600,446). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 1 is directed to an installation for a circulation of part-carrying pallets, comprising a support frame comprising "at least one vertical frame arrangement comprising a plurality of

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standard profile members rigidly welded together to form a rigid mecano-welded structure," and "at least two boxes each comprising a plurality of standard profile members rigidly welded together to form a mecano-welded structure."

The specification of the present application as originally filed specifically states that "with the progression in robotics, the pallets are being displaced at ever increasing speeds and are also subjected to ever increasing levels of acceleration, and this gives rise to major amounts of vibration which the support frames of the prior art are not capable of effectively withstanding." (Specification, page 1, line 32-page 2, line 2.)

GB '738 is one such prior art system. The Examiner suggests to combine the mecano welded frame work of Delannoy with the GB '738 system so as to build a steady and rigid structure. (Current Office action, page 3.) However, the GB '738 system does not contemplate the high speed of circulation which is made possible by the present invention. Thus, the GB '738 system does not experience a high level of vibration caused by the high speed of circulation. As a result, one skilled in the art would not be motivated to alter the structure of the GB '738 system to add stability an/or reduce vibration since at the speeds that the GB '738 system is operated, vibration is not a problem.

In addition, Delannoy discloses a device for handling elongated webs, and more particularly, to a machine for treating and preparing surgical bands after the manufacture of the bands. Delannoy does not disclose, teach or suggest the circulation of

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part carrying pallets. In fact, the abstract of Delannoy recites "[a]n apparatus which successively and **incontinuous** action ensures the winding of bands from skeins." (Emphasis added.) Thus, one skilled in the art would not be motivated to view the teachings of Delannoy in order to reduce vibration in a system for the circulation part carrying pallets.

Also, as the Examiner specifically states "'738 fails to teach; at least one vertical frame arrangement comprising a plurality of standard profile members rigidly welded together to forma a rigid mecano-welded structure; and at least two boxes each comprising a plurality of standard profile members rigidly welded together to form by a mecano-welded structure." Even if one were motivated to provide a mecano-welded structure on the system of GB '738, the Examiner seems to concede that the claimed "at least one vertical frame arrangement" and the claimed "at least two boxes" would still be missing from GB '738.

As such, for any of the reasons given above GB '738 and Delannoy do not render claim 1 obvious. Claims 3-10 and 13-16 depend from claim 1. Claim 1 is now believed to be in condition for allowance over GB '738 and Delannoy. As such, Applicant submits that claims 3-10 and 13-16 are also allowable over GB '738 and Delannoy as being dependent from an allowable base claim and for the additional limitations they contain therein. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 1, 3-10 and 13-16 over GB '738 and Delannoy under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

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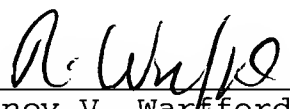
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Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that "claim 2 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims." Claim 2 has been rewritten in independent form as suggested by the Examiner. As such, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 2 is in condition for allowance.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-10 and 13-16 are in condition for allowance, and a timely indication of allowance is respectfully requested. If there are any remaining issues that can be addressed by telephone, Applicant invites the Examiner to contact the undersigned at the number indicated.

Respectfully submitted,
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